

Violence Reduction

JOSEPH TIERNEY AND ANAIS LOIZILLON
PUBLIC/PRIVATE VENTURES

Summary

The 1990s have seen a significant decline in the occurrence of violent crimes nationwide, especially in major metropolitan areas. Yet, the number of person-on-person crimes where youth appear as either offenders or victims remains persistently high in Philadelphia. The homicide rate among young Philadelphians is five times higher than that for the U.S. population. Given the overwhelming consequences of youth violence in Philadelphia, there is an urgency to address this issue and to develop timely and effective policy solutions to reduce the number of homicides across the City.

Public, private and nonprofit organizations in Philadelphia have worked together over the past year to set in motion a unique and promising partnership aimed at significantly reducing youth violence.

This report on Philadelphia's Youth Violence Reduction Project (YVRP):

- Summarizes the acute need for public and private violence reduction partnerships, both in Philadelphia and nationally;
- Describes outstanding current efforts by city agencies and youth-serving organizations to help curb youth violence in Philadelphia; and
- Outlines the evolution of the YVRP project, its current pilot program in the 24th Police District and the larger potential it has for Philadelphia.

The National Picture

According to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) of the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the nation's violent crime rate fell almost 7 percent during 1997 and has dropped more than 21 percent since 1993.¹ Violent crime rates began rising in the mid-1980s, but have now fallen to the lowest level in three decades.² Although some cities (e.g., Baltimore, Louisville, Nashville and Oakland) have not experienced tremendous drops in violent crime, the Uniform Crime Reports (UCRs) of the Federal Bureau of Investigation show that many big cities have had significantly fewer murders in 1997 than in the beginning of the decade. For example, New York City, which had 2,262 murders in 1992, had 983 in 1996 and 770 in 1997, the lowest number since 1964. Los Angeles had 709 murders in 1996 and 576 in 1997, nearly a 20 percent drop. Other big cities with significantly fewer murders in 1997 than in 1996 were Miami (103, down from 124), Newark (57, from 92) and Washington, D.C. (301, from 397).³

The decrease in violent crimes during this decade is real and obviously welcome. Surveys show that the drop in crime has begun to register with the American people, most of whom feel safer today than they did five years ago, and rightly so. At the same time, however, surveys show that crime and lawlessness continue to top the list of issues that Americans are most concerned about today. The federal government's role in crime control has expanded dramatically over the last three decades, but the efficacy of federal crime and drug policy remains much in doubt. Policymakers at all levels of government and in both

major political parties are expressing renewed appreciation for the fact that local government and grassroots community efforts, supported but not spawned or directed by Washington, matter most to public safety and crime prevention.

Even amidst the good national news about crime, the trend in crimes committed by and on young Americans has not been as favorable as the decline in adult crimes. Further, the criminal justice system is not prepared to deal with the present situation nor with the growth in the young adult population that will occur in the next decade. It would be a major urban and social policy mistake to assume that there is no present or near-term need for locally led, planned, public/private anticrime and youth violence reduction programs. Indeed, where the life prospects of many of the nation's poorest, most vulnerable urban youth and young adults are concerned, ignoring this need could be quite literally a fatal mistake. Four points are beyond contention.

First, the incidence of juvenile and young adult crime, especially among urban minority males, remains high, even as it has fallen steadily from its 1994 peak.

Juvenile crime rates in 1997 remained several times higher than they were in 1967, the year a presidential commission summoned the nation's attention to an alarming increase in youth crime. During the mid-1990s, America experienced around 2,000 youth homicides annually—more than the yearly totals of all homicides in the United Kingdom and Italy combined.⁴

During the early 1990s, African American males ages 14 to 24 made up slightly more than 1 percent of the general population but comprised about 17 percent of the murder victims and 30 percent of the perpetrators.⁵ Now, an African American male youth's risk of being a homicide victim is seven to nine times greater than that of a white male of a similar age.⁶

Second, gun-related violent crime remains a clear and present threat to public safety, especially where youth are concerned.

From 1984 to 1995, the number of youth killed with a gun quadrupled, while the number of murders with all other weapons remained constant.⁷ In 1995, some 47,000 juvenile "public order" offenses (e.g., disorderly conduct, weapons offense, liquor law violations) involved weapons violations.⁸ In 1997, more than one-quarter of all homicide victims were between ages 13 and 24 and were killed by a firearm; firearms were used in about 70 percent of all murders.⁹

Third, juvenile probation caseloads are growing, especially in urban America.

In 1995, the nation's juvenile courts handled about 1.7 million cases (a figure that understates the actual amount of juvenile offending, since an estimated 60 percent of the most serious juvenile criminals are not arrested).¹⁰ More than one-fifth of juvenile crime cases handled by the courts involved so-called "person offenses," such as assault, homicide, rape and robbery. Fewer than one in 10 juvenile cases resulted in placement in a residential or detention

New Horizons in Fighting Urban Crime

facility, and, with the passage of tougher juvenile crime statutes in many states, less than 2 percent of juvenile offenders were waived into criminal court or otherwise adjudicated as adults. Most adjudicated juveniles, including youth charged with person offenses, received probation. One result has been more than half a million juvenile probation cases a year.¹¹ Another has been an increasing number of urban juvenile probation cases that include youth adjudicated for person offenses.

Fourth, the number of children who are at risk of becoming victims or perpetrators of violent crimes will increase in the next millennium.

The nation's good news about crime is perhaps being underwritten at least in part by the post-1993 baby-bust generation's smaller population of male teens and 20-year-olds. By the year 2006, however, the United States will be home to more than 21 million teens, the largest number since 1980.¹² With most of the nation's violent crime being committed by males in their 20s, the coming increase in the nation's teen and 20-something populations could exert upward pressure on crime rates, most of all on the incidence of serious criminal violence by and against children and young adults.

One could hope that, whatever the number or life circumstances of criminally at-risk youth and young adults, some present or forthcoming combination of crime prevention, intervention and enforcement efforts will save the day—that is, save young lives and restore both public safety and private opportunity, even in the impoverished urban neighborhoods where youth violence and other social ills have long been highly concentrated. Using their own techniques, New York City and Boston have done exactly that—focus innovative crime-fighting methods on high-crime areas—and, so far, have been pronounced winners in the anticrime game.

In 1994 and 1995, dramatic drops in the number of murders in New York City were the prologue to the nation's good news about crime. New York City saw murders and other violent crimes plummet despite a stable youth population: murder is down 68 percent and felonies down 50 percent since 1993.¹³ The principal reasons for New York City's big drop in crime have been changes in policing strategy and management within the Police Department. Under police chief William Bratton's leadership, New York adopted various crime control strategies focused on quality-of-life violations (i.e., open street drug trading and prostitution, liquor license violations, youth violence in schools, guns on streets, domestic violence, auto-related crime) that undermined people's perception of safety in their neighborhoods. Kindred changes in policing strategy are now clearly making their crime-reduction mark in New Orleans and, as we shall discuss in more detail below, in Philadelphia.

The City of Boston, plagued by gang violence in the late 1980s and early 1990s, has received national recognition for reversing those trends by means of a comprehensive community/public agencies partnership. The drop in Boston's number of homicides has been one of the largest in the nation, an astounding 77 percent between 1990 (152 homicides) and 1998 (35 homicides). Moreover, Boston's homicide rate (number of homicides per 100,000 residents) dropped from 26.1 in 1990 to 7.8 in 1997—the lowest level seen since the mid-1960s.¹⁴ During a 29-month period ending in January 1998, Boston had no teenage (16 and under) firearm-related homicide victims.¹⁵

For its visible reduction in crime, especially in troubled neighborhoods such as Roxbury and Dorchester, Boston is envied by other cities that have not fared so well. Three innovative practices have played a key role in reducing violent crime in Boston: (1) a clergy-police partnership to reduce youth violence by targeting gang-related perpetrators (Operation Cease Fire); (2) joint police-probation patrols (Operation Night Light); and (3) the joint engagement of clergy, police, probation and community street workers to communicate the seriousness of criminal activity and its consequences to neighborhood gangs and at-risk youth, and to provide resources for activities such as recreational programs or job training for those youth.¹⁶

The Philadelphia Story

For well over a decade now, crime and education have dominated social policy concerns about Philadelphia's future. A recent study found that nationally each additional street crime is associated with a one-person decline in the number of city residents. In Philadelphia, that finding is bolstered not only by a quarter-century of out-migration but by numerous surveys indicating that crime is the number one civic worry of City residents (so designated by 55 percent of residents in 1997 and 63 percent in 1998).¹⁷

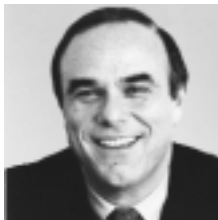
In recent years, the number of homicides has started to decline among "older" Philadelphians. Between 1995 and 1998, the number of homicide victims age 25 or older fell dramatically from 270 to 183; the number of gunshot victims in this age group fell in similar proportion from 197 to 137 during the same period. The good news surrounding the drop in the number of older homicide victims, however, did not translate into an analogous decline in homicides among the population age 24 or younger. The number of young homicide victims dropped insignificantly from 164 to 157 between 1995 and 1998; additionally, the number of gunshot victims changed little from 137 (1995) to 136 (1998).¹⁸

Youth homicides concentrate in parts of the City that have the common characteristics of struggling neighborhoods, such as high joblessness, numerous building vacancies and open street drug trading and use. Sector P (bounded by Front Street, Lehigh, Kensington and Allegheny Avenues) of the 24th Police District experienced the highest number of youth homicides (26) during the 1995-1998 period than any other police sector in the City. Adjoining sectors in the 25th Police District also had some of the highest number of youth homicides in the City (see map 2).

Over the last several years, Philadelphia has been home to many anticrime and violence reduction strategies, each of which appears to have yielded positive results in other jurisdictions and all of which have begun to make a difference on the City's streets and to energize community leaders and residents. The following paragraphs detail just a few of the many violence reduction efforts under way. They are characterized by a firm and unified commitment to reduce violent crime, a willingness to work across city departments and agencies by sharing staff and budgets, and the realization that the community needs to be involved in successful anticrime initiatives.

Mayor's Children and Families

Cabinet. In 1993, Mayor Edward Rendell established the Mayor's Children and Families Cabinet. The Cabinet's stated goals are to ensure that children entering the first grade are socially and emotionally prepared to learn; to increase the number of youth graduating from high school who are ready for employment or college; and to prevent the occurrence of youth violence and crime. Recreation Commissioner Michael DiBerardinis chairs the Youth Violence Reduction Initiatives of the Cabinet, which have served as the catalyst for many of the



antiviolence endeavors currently under way. This subcommittee focuses on creating positive alternatives to violence for youth, balanced with a tough legislation-based approach to violent crime. Several of the initiatives include Philadelphia Safe and Sound; a newly created handgun reduction task force; development of after-school programs; support for the Straw Purchase Reduction Act; research on a potential lawsuit against handgun manufacturers; and the coordination of information exchange among city, state and federal law enforcement agencies.

Quality-of-Life Policing. Since his appointment as Police Commissioner in March 1998, John Timoney has implemented a variety of innovative management and modernization techniques to make the

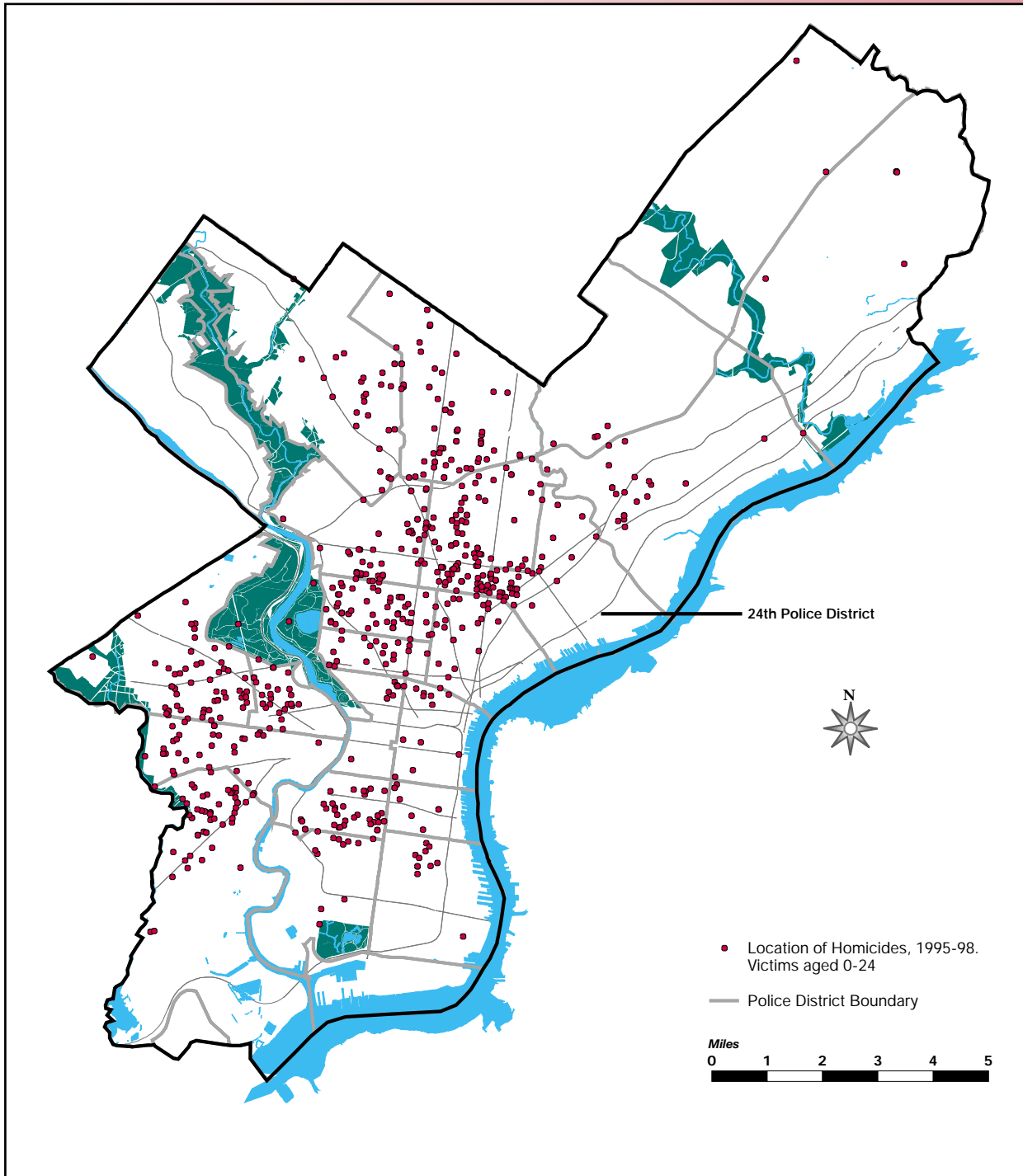


Philadelphia Police Department more effective in reducing all crimes. With a focus on specific types of criminal activity, Commissioner Timoney initiated a comprehensive

quality-of-life policing strategy in Philadelphia similar to the one he coordinated in New York City: getting guns off the streets, driving out drug dealers and street prostitution, breaking the cycle of domestic violence, reclaiming public spaces and reducing auto-related crime. Each prong of this policing strategy involves a wide range of internal policy changes and new procedures.

Perhaps the most publicized campaign is Operation Sunrise, a four-phase anticrime mobilization targeting a section of North Philadelphia (bordered by Tioga Street, Trenton Avenue, York Street and Germantown Avenue). Under the auspices of Operation Sunrise, the Police Department and the City's Managing Director's Office have coordinated the efforts of eight city departments; city, state and federal prosecutors and other law enforcement agencies; neighborhood organizations; churches; PECO Energy and the Philadelphia Gas Works. These organizations have partnered to clean the streets and playgrounds, close speakeasies, board up vacant homes, fix street lights and signs, distribute resource referrals and promote antiviolence education. The police have committed an unprecedented number of officers to maintain a 24-hour presence in the targeted area until they can eliminate open street criminal behaviors, such as prostitution and drug trafficking. Since its kickoff in June 1998, more than 1300

Map 1: Youth Homicides in Philadelphia (1995-98)



vacant houses and lots used for prostitution and drug sales were cleaned and sealed, 900 abandoned vehicles were removed from the street and drug-related arrests have tripled.¹⁹

Amending Juvenile Legislation. As the legislative chairperson of the Pennsylvania District Attorneys Association, Philadelphia District Attorney Lynne Abraham led the association's lobbying efforts to amend the Juvenile Act the primary legislation in Pennsylvania addressing juvenile delinquency. The new purposes of the Juvenile Act, which became effective in March 1996, balance the protection of the community with the imposition of accountability for offenses committed by minors. The Juvenile Act significantly increases the penal consequences for youth age 15 to 17 who commit violent crimes, and promotes the development of positive skills during rehabilitation. The amended statute requires criminal court prosecution of youth age 15 to 17 who commit the most serious interpersonal crimes with a deadly weapon or



who have a prior violent record. The targeted offenses—considered felonies if committed by an adult—include rape, aggravated assault, robbery, vehicular robbery, manslaughter and conspiracy or attempt to commit any of these crimes. The Juvenile Act, as amended, opens proceedings for many cases; allows information sharing between courts, schools and police; and expands the use of delinquency records.

Gun Control Legislation. City officials and local activists have supported several pieces of gun control legislation and tougher enforcement of existing gun control laws. Mayor Rendell is promoting legislation at the state and federal levels that aims to reduce the availability of guns, even legally purchased ones, to criminals on Philadelphia's streets.

The Straw Purchase Reduction Act, currently under consideration by the Pennsylvania legislature, would limit handgun purchases to one a month and strengthen the penalties for illegally purchasing a gun for another person. The Mayor, District Attorney and Police Commissioner have rallied behind this bill, which would in effect limit the number of handguns one could purchase legally and resell illegally on the street to those who could not buy from licensed dealers. Mayor Rendell also is supporting similar legislation at the federal level to limit handgun sales. He has actively promoted federal legislation requiring gun manufacturers to make handguns less deadly by limiting the number of bullets in a gun and decreasing the lethality of bullets. In addition to handgun-related legislation, the Mayor hopes to introduce five-year mandatory minimum sentences for repeat felons caught carrying guns.

In 1998, the City began Operation Cease Fire, a cooperative project involving the Philadelphia District Attorney and the U.S. Attorney.²⁰ The federally funded initiative received a congressional appropriation with the support of the National Rifle Association (NRA) and Mayor Rendell. Through Operation Cease Fire, the City seeks federal prosecution of individuals arrested on gun possession charges if the offender has a specified previous felony conviction or is an armed career criminal.

Operation Cease Fire takes advantage of heightened federal penalties for convicted criminals caught carrying guns. According to the Mayor, individuals convicted in federal court receive an average prison sentence of over six years, while those convicted in City courts receive an average sentence of less than one year. Seventy-eight individuals have been indicted in the first two months of Operation Cease Fire.

Philadelphia Safe and Sound. Safe and Sound, funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, has a mission to improve the health and safety of children between six and 16 years of age in Philadelphia. Since the organization's inception in 1998, Safe and Sound has concentrated its efforts specifically on reducing youth violence and youth substance abuse citywide (starting in the low-income and crime-ridden area of north central Philadelphia). Led by Naomi Post, Safe and Sound has a twofold strategy to accomplish its ambitious goals. First, through Neighborhood Coordinating Teams (NCTs), Safe and Sound helps citizens unite around a youth agenda and establish a permanent structure of community leadership. Second, the Mayor's Children and Families Cabinet designated itself as the lead agency for Safe and Sound and thereby cultivated an environment across city agencies to improve supports for youth and their families and to commit new or continued resources to youth-related issues. The combination of the two Safe and Sound strategies—with additional cooperation from private nonprofit organizations, community-based organizations, corporations and foundations—has rekindled the collaboration of citizens with local government (including police, probation, health and human services departments) as well as that of NCTs with service delivery organizations to achieve the common goal of improving socioenvironmental conditions for youth citywide.

Peacemakers. With the support of The William Penn Foundation, community organizations in Philadelphia have joined a public health initiative directed by the Philadelphia Health Management Corporation (PHMC). Peacemakers is a community response to violence; it supports joint youth leadership and adult participation in violence prevention efforts. Through the activities of 12 citywide community and church-based organizations, Philadelphians of all ages are involved in cleaning up playgrounds and vacant lots, learning conflict resolution strategies, running street safety patrols and promoting interracial harmony in diverse neighborhoods. PHMC helps these organizations build the capacity to approach youth violence through training, supporting grassroots efforts and increasing communication between the organizations and the communities they serve.

Community Education and Awareness. ICE (I Can End) Violence, which kicked off in the summer of 1998, is a public awareness and education campaign targeted at community groups and organizations. Under ICE Violence, a collaboration of public and private agencies, including PHMC, the Department of Health, the Department of Recreation and Philadelphia Anti-Drug/Anti-Violence Network (P.A.A.N.), has made a commitment to provide resources to any organization that wants to educate youth about guns and violence. For example, the Department of Recreation has prepared training materials and leadership kits and made available posters, buttons and other materials to spread the collaborative's antiviolence message. The public education campaign also instructs adults on how to teach conflict resolution and anger management to youth and to communicate themes to young people, such as "I don't want you to pick up a gun" and "I want you to live." ICE Violence complements legislative strategies that seek to take handguns off the street by working to change youth's attitudes about guns.

Chart 1: Youth Homicide Trend in Philadelphia



The Youth Violence Reduction Project

Amidst the plenitude of effort and will on the part of numerous organizations targeting youth violence, the number of citywide murders among the population age 24 or younger has changed little since 1995. The abundance of weapons on the streets is evidenced by the fact that seven of every eight young homicide victims die as a result of gunshot wounds in Philadelphia.

The Youth Violence Reduction Project (YVRP) developed in this environment as a concerted effort by many of the lead agencies involved in the anticrime and community development strategies outlined above. While each violence reduction effort carried out independently by law enforcement, recreation or social service agencies and community groups is commendable, those efforts could be intensified by active, regularized cooperation.

With support from The William Penn Foundation and The Pew Charitable Trusts, Public/Private Ventures (P/PV), led by John J. Dilulio, Jr., engaged the City's key law



enforcement officials, other agency heads and networks of community and clergy leaders to address the problem of youth violence in Philadelphia. One of

the immediate goals of this effort was to support and inform the development of a coordinated, detailed and timely youth violence reduction project for the City of Philadelphia. The YVRP would take advantage of the unique partnerships forged through the aforementioned violence reduction efforts; it also would add operational components to coordinate some existing initiatives and forge new relationships among agencies.

P/PV sponsored two YVRP policy development sessions in Philadelphia that brought together key Philadelphia leaders willing and able to implement the YVRP and leaders from Boston to discuss their city's significant reduction in juvenile violence. Philadelphia leaders met with key staff from

the main groups responsible for the decline in Boston's youth homicide rate in the mid-1990s: the Boston Police Department, the Dorchester District Court's Probation Department and clergy members of the Ella J. Baker House.

In describing Boston's violence reduction achievements, Boston officials underscored the prominent role held by a few individuals who led this effort "bottom-up" through innovation in their respective departments or organizations. Major shifts in institutional approaches accompanied these practices in order to formalize the relationships between and among public and private organizations. Notably, probation departments changed from a fortress probation model, in which probation officers rarely left the confines of their offices to supervise their clients, to meeting with young probationers and their families in their homes and on the streets. Clergy leaders, traditionally known to accuse police forces of unfairly targeting minority youth, cooperated with police to target those youth who were destroying their communities through drug dealing and gang-related activities. To help Philadelphia overcome the difference in the two cities' levels of project development, Boston officials suggested that Philadelphia incorporate a learning and development phase that would give officials room to adjust to potential difficulties faced in formalizing interagency and public, private and clergy cooperation.

In the summer of 1998, P/PV sponsored a two-day trip to Boston for a small group of Philadelphia civic and community leaders, including the Administrative Judge of Family Court, two Deputy Mayors, the District Attorney, a Deputy Police Commissioner and the Recreation Commissioner. The group met with researchers from Harvard University, members of the Ella J. Baker House, representatives of the Boston Police Department, the Boston District Attorney and other Boston officials who had attended previous YVRP meetings. The Philadelphia group visited the neighborhoods involved in the joint effort of police, probation and clergy, and obtained a first-hand understanding of Boston's success in reducing youth and

gang-related violence. This interaction provided Philadelphia leaders with a unique opportunity to begin visualizing a youth violence reduction strategy for Philadelphia and to pose questions to experienced authorities.

The Boston meetings and early YVRP sessions culminated in a firm commitment by Philadelphia leaders to develop a kindred project focusing on the City's youth and their vulnerability to crime. YVRP partners met monthly to conceptualize a project that would target a specific group of neighborhood youth in real danger of succumbing to criminal violence either as victims or perpetrators (or both). The YVRP meetings produced a multiagency project that models itself after the operating principles in Boston, balancing severe consequences to youth who commit violent crimes with the provision of education, recreation and job training resources.

The main components of the YVRP project—described in operational detail in the following section—include:

- Designating youth to become the focus of antiviolence efforts by law enforcement and youth development agencies;
- Intensive supervision of designated youth by police and probation officers, especially through the operation of joint police-probation patrols;
- Linkages to various community supports such as congregations and to programs offering developmental opportunities to designated youth;
- The presence of community members (street workers) who act as advocates for the youth and serve as human bridges between designated youth and other YVRP partners; and,
- An expedited judicial process and committed prosecution of designated youth who violate the terms of their probation or who are arrested for a violent offense. This process is facilitated by increased cooperation and communication among law enforcement agencies.



Reinventing Probation in Boston, Philadelphia and Beyond

by Ronald P. Corbett, Jr., Deputy Commissioner, Massachusetts Probation Department and Chair, Reinventing Probation Committee

It takes a crisis to change a bureaucracy. Convulsed by dramatically rising rates of youth homicide in the early 1990s, Boston probation and police officials threw out existing blueprints in a desperate search for more effective strategies. A fearsome necessity became the mother of reinvention.

Operation Nightlight, a police-probation partnership involving intensive home and street contacts with high-risk offenders during evening hours, emerged in 1993 as a wholly new approach for combating youth violence. Nightlight rested on the stunningly simple premise that "you can't fight fires from the station house." It was designed to reverse the trend of desk-bound probation officers working primarily out of their offices with little visible presence in the community, in an anemic form of community corrections disparagingly referred to as "fortress probation."

Nightlight worked, particularly because it was combined with several other imaginative policing, prosecutorial and community outreach strategies. Youth homicides dropped steeply and the city grew hopeful again.

The success of Nightlight provided momentum for a thorough rethinking of probation strategies throughout Massachusetts. It also led to a new model that placed increased emphasis on tighter supervision and stricter enforcement, coupled with a heightened presence of probation officers in the community. Officers subsequently felt a new confidence in their efforts and gained greater respect in the public eye.

A similar sense of renewal and reform has emerged in a number of states around the country, notably Washington, Wisconsin, Arizona and Virginia. Probation executives from these and a few other states networked through the American Probation and Parole Association (APPA) and the National Association of Probation Executives (NAPE) to share information and experiences, publicize their still nascent efforts, and enlist converts to the cause of a reinvented probation.

Public/Private Ventures (P/PV) provided critical attention and support at a key stage in this evolution. Intrigued by the Boston story and

anxious to import new ideas to Philadelphia, P/PV board member and Princeton professor John Dilulio invited a group of probation leaders from across the country to come together to refine their thinking about new directions in probation. The Reinventing Probation Committee, which includes some of Philadelphia's senior probation officials, also became a forum for Philadelphia to receive innovative technical assistance and officer training. While still a work in progress, new links between Philadelphia's probation and police departments show promising results.

The Reinventing Probation Committee is completing a monograph designed to set forth the major principles and programs that animate the reinventing movement. The monograph will examine such topics as public opinion and expectations regarding probation, exemplary strategies for reducing recidivism and ensuring appropriate sanctioning and deterrence, techniques for building partnerships with related agencies, and strategies for fostering community involvement. APPA President Mario Paparozzi, also a member of the committee, will devote the opening plenary session of the association's annual conference in August 1999 to the reinventing probation project.

There is still much work to be done if probation is to gain the kind of public legitimacy that it is so visibly lacking in too many cities. If fresh evidence were needed of the national crisis in confidence that besets probation, *Boston Globe* columnist Jeff Jacoby provided it in a recent column: "An activist genuinely alarmed about the loss of life in this country would throw himself into a crusade to eliminate probation and parole."

Jacoby's remarks are both a sobering reminder and a direct challenge to those of us who believe much can be gained in terms of both public safety and lives restored to productive citizenship through a reinvented probation system. With over three million probationers living in and moving around communities across America, a reformed, revitalized and ultimately reinvented probation system can, we have learned, bring real relief to beleaguered neighborhoods.

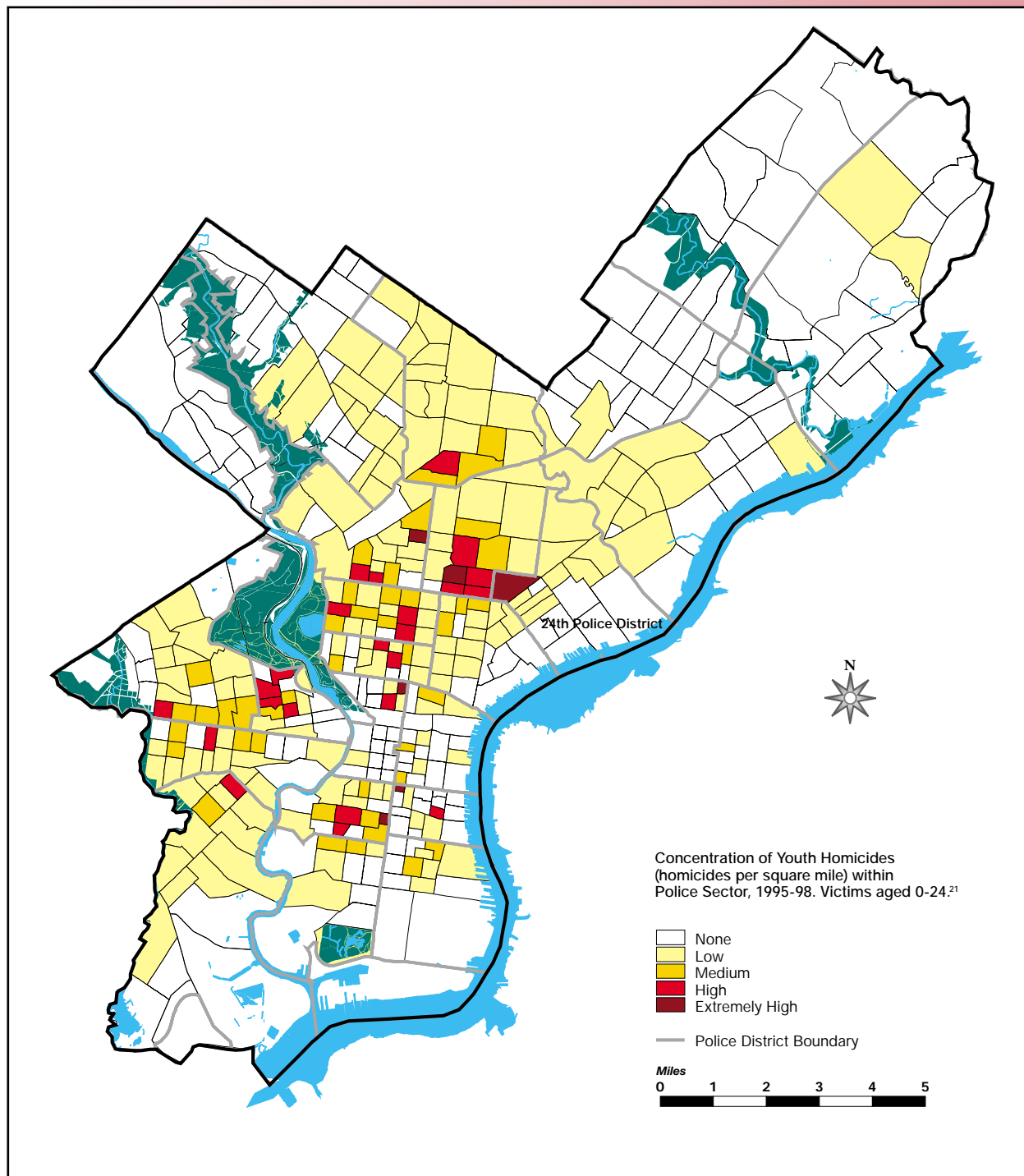


Ronald P. Corbett, Jr.

The YVRP partners decided to implement a development phase with a pilot program designed to test interagency communication and smooth out operational difficulties before expanding to other areas of the City. They identified existing youth violence reduction activities in the City and incorporated them into the general project development process. They also obtained a commitment from City leaders in law enforcement agencies and in the Mayor's Office to contribute resources and staff to the pilot program, which facilitated and accelerated work on the various project components.

YVRP members met in subcommittees to address the operational components of the program. One group identified a protocol for each active agency and developed a process of interagency communication to ensure that the parts remain coordinated with the whole. Another group defined selection criteria for the designated population, such as age, type of criminal record, street reputation and lack of involvement in community activities. Baseline information about the citywide distribution of violent juvenile crime, juveniles and young adults on probation and community resources was analyzed by P/PV and informed the decision about where to develop a YVRP pilot program. As operational agreements emerged from these discussions, city agencies and community organizations developed budgets that would support a cooperative interagency effort.

Map 2: Concentration of Youth Homicides in Philadelphia (1995-98)



The 24th Police District Pilot Program

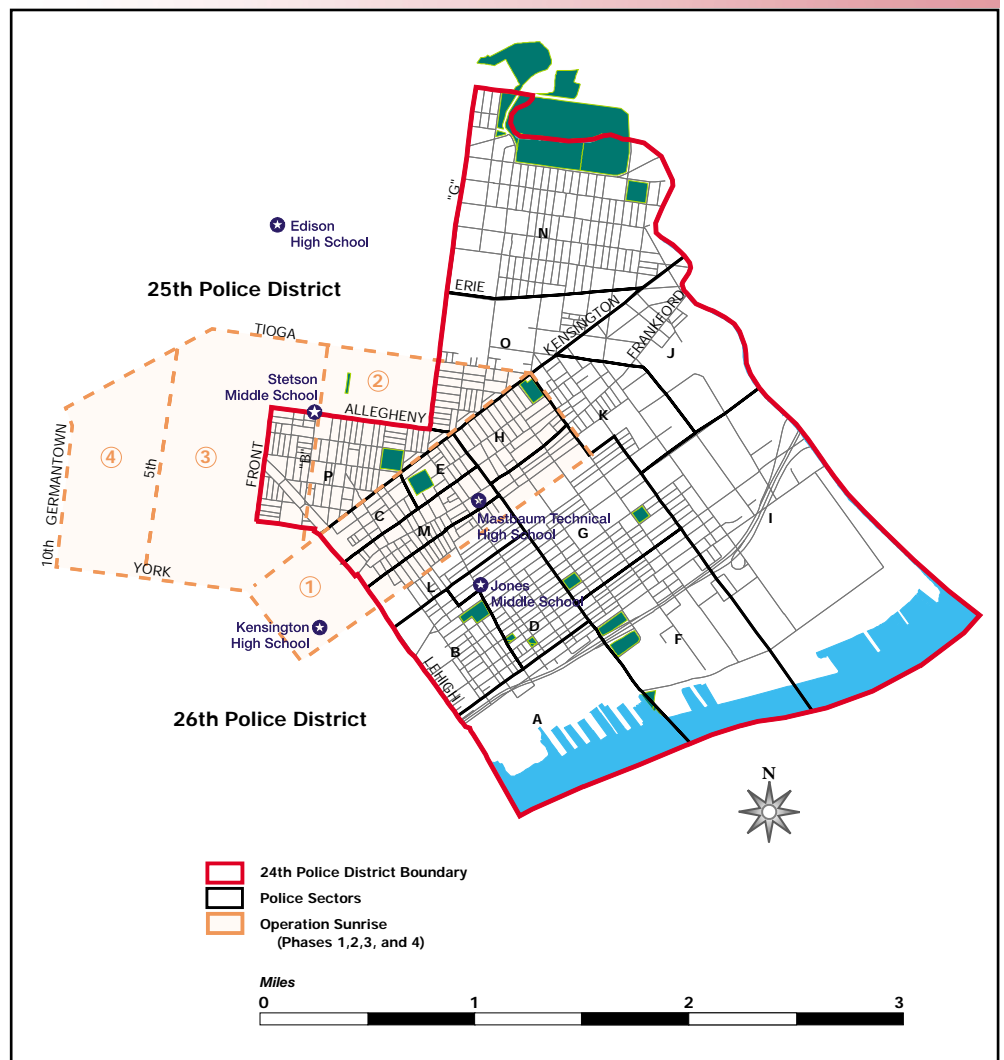
The YVRP pilot program in the 24th Police District, scheduled to hit the streets in June 1999, involves public and private leaders working in partnership with the common goal of reducing violent crimes committed by and against children and young adults. Using baseline information about the distribution of violent juvenile crime and probation supervision, members of the YVRP moved to develop and implement a pilot project in those areas of Philadelphia's Kensington and Port Richmond neighborhoods within the 24th Police District.

Targeting Youth. The Police Department, Philadelphia Safe and Sound, Adult and Juvenile Probation offices, P.A.A.N. and the District Attorney's Office will identify 100 youth to participate in YVRP. Selection criteria include age (24 or younger), living in or committing crimes in the 24th Police District, and considered at risk of committing a violent crime or becoming a victim of a violent crime. Of the 92 youth identified to date, more than 90 percent have been arrested for criminal offenses, including armed robbery, attempted murder or drug dealing. Those who have never been arrested are known to be threatening individuals in the community because they have gotten into violent fights at school or are suspected drug dealers. Seventy-five percent of the designated youth are 18 years old or younger. The identified youth are predominantly male, although YVRP staff have identified eight young women for participation.

Intensive Supervision of Designated Youth by Law Enforcement Agencies. A hallmark of the YVRP is supervision of the designated youth by law enforcement officials with an intensity that far exceeds any current strategies. Police and probation officers will conduct joint patrols three times a week to maintain close contact with probationers and their families—in their homes and on the streets—and to have a street-level community presence. Their operating principles are to make sure youth are honoring the terms of their community-based sentences (i.e., parole or pro-

bation conditions) and to show evidence that youth can no longer disregard those terms without legal consequences. The patrols will last eight hours, which includes time for a prepatrol planning meeting with P.A.A.N. street workers to identify specific youth and locations to be visited during that shift and time for documenting the results of the patrol. An important element of the debriefing is deciding which youth need immediate support from the array of supportive services that the YVRP has amassed and communicating that information to street workers and clergy.

Map 3: 24th Police District



In addition to home visits that probation officers make with police officers, probation officers will continue to make a number of home visits as part of their supervisory plan. Probation officers will also become familiar with the facts of each youth's case and make referrals for outside services (e.g., job training, substance abuse counseling) whenever appropriate. The increased number of home visits and referrals to outside services represents a significantly more proactive approach by the probation officers. The Offices of Juvenile Probation and Adult Probation have each assigned several probation officers to the YVRP. Unlike their current schedule, which is mostly a nine-to-five desk job, probation officers will supervise designated youth during early morning and late night shifts, six or seven days a week. To facilitate their work on the YVRP, the Office of Juvenile Probation is considering opening an office in the 24th Police District.

In addition to joint patrols, police officers will review each violent crime committed in the 24th Police District to determine if any designated youth were involved—as perpetrator, victim or witness. If a designated youth is rearrested, the police will pass this information to the probation officers and street workers, who will in turn monitor the young person's progress through the court system. The Police Department has assigned to the YVRP two patrol officers and a sergeant who will conduct all the joint police-probation patrols.

Provision of Positive Supports to Youth. The ultimate outcome of the YVRP is not only to protect the community by preventing the designated youth from committing violent crimes but to help those same youth become productive self-sufficient adults. Safe and Sound has assumed the leadership role in identifying resources in the community and distributing this information to the YVRP partners. This organization has developed a list of positive supports that designated youth can access: Department of Recreation after-school and athletic programs, youth programs in churches, employment agencies, job training and placement programs and a network of neighborhood organizations with specialized roles in assisting designated youth. The YVRP will be responsible for cataloging these programs, chairing sessions to review the case files of designated youth and adopting plans for offering them positive supports.

The Role of the Street Workers.

Street workers, employed by P.A.A.N., will have daily contact with designated youth, interacting with them at their school, home and hangouts. Street workers will monitor the designated youth's activities and help them to stay away from situations that could lead them to commit or become victims of violent crime. P.A.A.N. will assign one street worker for every 10 to 15 youth. Street workers who are assigned school-aged youth will work 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., while those assigned to older youth will work 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. Both groups will work Saturdays on a rotating schedule.

An important role for the street workers is to serve as mentors for the designated youth. For example, street workers will counsel youth about their personal behavior, encouraging them to keep away from undesirable situations or individuals. Street workers will also continue to work with youth who are rearrested or violate their community-based sentence. Finally, street workers will make referrals to education, employment training programs or other services the youth need, and work to see that they follow through with suggested opportunities.

An Expedited Judicial Process.

The District Attorney assigned Deputy District Attorney John Delaney to the YVRP to help identify youthful violent offenders and support the development of operational protocols for each organizational member of the YVRP. The District Attorney has agreed to prioritize the prosecution of designated youth who are arrested. The YVRP partners have asked the administrative judges of Family (juveniles) and Criminal (adults) Courts to assign one judge each to hear cases involving designated youth. This will allow these judges to become familiar with the designated youth and to ensure all their cases are conducted in the same manner by the courts.

The District Attorney's Office will monitor arrest records throughout the City to determine if a designated youth has committed a crime in another police district. If a designated youth is rearrested, the District Attorney, like the police who arrest a youth in the 24th Police District, will pass this information to the probation officers and street workers who will monitor the young person's progress through the court system.

Monitoring the Pilot Program's

Progress. The YVRP partners have created internal mechanisms and protocols to monitor the progress of the pilot program as it unfolds in the 24th District. Safe and Sound's Executive Director Post and Deputy District Attorney Delaney will continue to cochair the YVRP plenary meetings to evaluate and, if necessary, adjust communication and operational strategies that promote interagency cooperation. Each organization or agency working directly with the designated youth will contribute to a central database that provides the YVRP with timely information on the youths' progress through the pilot program. Advanced research on the data will further illuminate the effectiveness of the pilot program's operational components as well as document its effectiveness in lowering the incidence of violent crime committed by and on persons age 24 or under in the 24th Police District. The YVRP partners are also committed to participating in regular review meetings to iron out and modify operational protocols as necessary. By constructing and deepening existing ties between organizations as they work with at-risk youth and carefully documenting their efforts, the YVRP partners hope that the pilot program will serve as a learning phase before moving the YVRP into other police districts.

P/PV's Role. P/PV will evaluate the YVRP pilot program, develop and maintain a database of violent crimes and community supports in the 24th Police District, prepare citywide and area maps of crime and community voluntary youth-serving organization data, provide advice on training plans and operational protocols, engage the clergy in YVRP and continue to serve as the liaison with the project team from Boston. P/PV will support the YVRP partners as they attempt to marshal financial, informational and other resources necessary to support the pilot program and possible YVRP expansion.



YVRP Participation

The following Philadelphia organizations and individuals have participated in the development of the Youth Violence Reduction Project:

Adult/Juvenile Probation, James Narlesky, Edward Burnley
Adult Probation and Parole, Court of Common Pleas, Robert Malvestuto, Patricia Blow, W. Kevin Reynolds
Bethel Temple Community Church, Rev. Joel Van Dyke, Andy Slamans, Deanna Slamans
Cornerstone Church, Rev. Joe Darrow
Court of Common Pleas, President Judge Alex Bonavita, Administrative Judge Paul Panepinto
Deputy Mayor's Office, Gun Violence/Drug Control Policy, Richard Zappile
Deputy Mayor's Office, Policy and Planning, Donna Cooper, Jennifer Friedman
Greater Church of Philadelphia, Rev. Joel Barnaby, Rev. Lee Godwin
Juvenile Probation, Family Court, Kenneth E. Hale, Brian Coen, Irwin Gregg
Metropolitan Career Center, John Rice
Philadelphia Anti-Drug/Anti-Violence Network, James Mills, Darryl Coates, Damian Padilla, Mary Cousar, Major Davis, Jason DiMartino, Pablo Mateo
Philadelphia Department of Human Services, Joan Reeves, Joyce Burrell, Pat Barr
Philadelphia Department of Recreation, Michael DiBerardinis, Jean Hunt, Kathleen Muller
Philadelphia District Attorney's Office, Lynne Abraham, Michael Cleary, John Delaney
Philadelphia Health Management Corporation, Richard Cohen, Alice Reynolds
Philadelphia Interdisciplinary Youth Fatality Review Team, Dr. Paul Fink
Philadelphia Police Department, John Timoney, Gordon Wasserman, Charles Temparali, John Bidey, Michael Weaver, David Jardine, Joseph O'Donnell, Dennis Salkowski
Philadelphia Safe and Sound, Naomi Post, Denise Clayton, Anthony Nazzario
Prevention Outreach Program (Department of Health), Dr. Ernest Tymes
Private Industry Council, Ernest Jones
Public/Private Ventures, John Dilulio, Mark Hughes, Rev. Dr. Harold Dean Trulear, Terry Cooper, Anais Loizillon, Cindy Terrels, Joseph Tierney
Radio Salvación, Jason Carrion
St. Phillips United Methodist Church, Rev. Bill Wolfe
Shalom House, Dave Krueger
Wilkey Church, Rev. Kevin Yoho

Final Thoughts

The YVRP is unfolding as a unique civic venture in Philadelphia and is aimed at significantly reducing juvenile homicides through united law enforcement and community-based leadership. The partnership's dedication to providing positive alternatives to designated youth underscores that its mission is not to lock up at-risk youth indiscriminately, but to guide and support them in reaching successful and productive adult lives. For those who falter or continue on a trajectory toward an adult life of crime, the YVRP leaders have agreed to apply appropriate legal consequences.

The YVRP pilot program comes not a moment too soon for Philadelphia's youth and communities. As violent crime committed by juveniles remains at an alarmingly high rate and the fear of criminal behavior continues to deplete the City of its residents and investments, the YVRP pilot program aims to return a sense of safety to the City's troubled neighborhoods. There is still much work to be done and lessons to be learned, but the YVRP partners are emboldened by the promise of the idea, the success of other local violence reduction efforts and the new partnership that has formed and focused its energy on reducing youth violence.

Endnotes

- 1 Michael Rand, *Criminal Victimization 1997: Changes 1996-97 with Trends 1993-97*, Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, 1999).
- 2 Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice, Crime and Victim Statistics, Internet page at URL: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/cvict.htm#summary>.
- 3 U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Criminal Information Services Division, "Crime in the U.S. 1995-97: Uniform Crime Reports," Internet page at URL: <http://www.fbi.gov/publish/crime.htm>.
- 4 Home Office, *Criminal Statistics: England and Wales*, 1996, presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State, November 1997, p27; U.S. Department of Justice, "Crime in the U.S., 1995-97: Uniform Crime Reports."
- 5 James Alan Fox, *Trends in Juvenile Violence: A Report to the U.S. Attorney General on Current and Future Rates of Juvenile Offending* (Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice, March 1996), p2, fig6b.
- 6 James Alan Fox and Marianne W. Zawitz, *Homicide Trends in the United States*, Bureau of Justice Statistics Crime Data Brief (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Jan. 1999), Internet page at URL: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/homicide/hmtrnd.htm>.
- 7 Fox, p2, fig8.
- 8 Sickmund et al., *Juvenile Court Statistics 1995* (Washington, D.C.: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice, May 1998), p5.
- 9 U.S. Department of Justice, "Crime in the U.S., 1995-97: Uniform Crime Reports."
- 10 Delbert S. Elliott et al., "Self-reported Violent Offenders," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, December 1986, p502-3. The number of youth committing crimes is underestimated further if one examines the proportion of arrested youth who are not even reviewed by the juvenile court system. For example, according to the bipartisan Council on Crime in America, 2.7 million youths under age 18 were arrested in 1994. Juvenile court statistics, however, account for only 1.5 million youth cases that same year, or approximately 56 percent of all arrested youth.
- 11 Sickmund et al., p5, 9, 13, 15.
- 12 U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1994* (Washington, D.C.: 1994) and Census Middle Series Projections (March 1996) and Estimates (December 1998), from Internet page at URL: <http://www.census.gov>.
- 13 William J. Bratton and William Andrews, "Crime & Punishment: What We've Learned about Policing," *City Journal*, Spring 1999, p14.
- 14 Boston Police Department and Campbell Gibson, *Population of the 100 Largest Cities and Other Urban Places in the United States: 1790 to 1990*, Population Division Working Paper No. 27 (Washington, D.C.: Population Division, U.S. Bureau of the Census, June 1998), tables 19-22.
- 15 Boston Police Department.
- 16 For an insider's perspective on New York City's policing changes, see William Bratton with Peter Knobler, *Turnaround: How America's Top Cop Reversed the Crime Epidemic* (New York: Random House, 1998). For a description of Boston's interagency efforts, see Jenny Berrein and Christopher Winship "Should We Have Faith in the Churches? Ten-Point Coalition's Effect on Boston's Youth Violence" in *Managing Youth Violence*, Gary Katzmann, ed. (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, forthcoming).
- 17 Greater Philadelphia First 1997 and 1998 poll results, as cited in Pennsylvania Economy League, "A Mayor for the City: Commentaries Highlighting Key Issues for the 1999 Philadelphia Mayor's Race," Issue 4, December 1998.
- 18 Philadelphia Police Department.
- 19 Numbers compiled by Philadelphia Safe and Sound.
- 20 Although Philadelphia and Boston's Cease Fire operations share the same name, they are independent law enforcement initiatives with distinct objectives.
- 21 Legend's numerical values are as follows: None (0); low (0-21); medium (21.001-40); high (40.001-80) and extremely high (80.001-120.945).

The Philadelphia Police Department provided the data for the maps and chart.

Public/Private Ventures is a national non-profit organization whose mission is to improve the effectiveness of social policies, programs and community initiatives, especially as they affect youth and young adults. In carrying out this mission, P/PV works with philanthropies, the public and business sectors, and nonprofit organizations.

Board of Directors

Siobhan Nicolau, Chair
President
Hispanic Policy Development Project

Amalia V. Betanzos
President
Wildcat Service Corporation

Yvonne Chan
Principal
Vaughn Learning Center

John J. Dilulio, Jr.
Professor of Politics and Public Policy
Princeton University

Alice F. Emerson
Senior Fellow
Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

Susan Fuhrman
Dean, Graduate School of Education
University of Pennsylvania

Matthew McGuire
Anthropology Department
Harvard University

Michael P. Morley
Senior Vice President
Eastman Kodak Company

Jeremy Nowak
Chief Executive Officer
Delaware Valley Community Reinvestment Fund

Marion Pines
Senior Fellow
Institute for Policy Studies
Johns Hopkins University

Isabel Carter Stewart
National Executive Director
Girls Incorporated

Mitchell Sviridoff
Community Development Consultant

Marta Tienda
Professor of Sociology
Princeton University

Gary Walker
President
Public/Private Ventures

William Julius Wilson
Lewis P. and Linda L. Geyser
University Professor
Harvard University



Public/Private Ventures
 One Commerce Square
 2005 Market Street, Suite 900
 Philadelphia, PA 19103
 TEL: (215) 557-4400
 FAX: (215) 557-4469
 URL: <http://www.ppv.org>

Community Policy Research at Public/Private Ventures is sponsored by a grant from the Fund for Urban Neighborhood Development of The Pew Charitable Trusts. Funding for this report was also provided by The William Penn Foundation. The opinions expressed in this report are those of Public/Private Ventures and do not necessarily reflect the views of the funders.

DESIGN: MALISH AND PAGONIS
 MAPS: ANAIS LOIZILLON